

IN THE CLAIMS

The following claim listing replaces all prior claim listings:

1. (Currently Amended) A content secondary distribution management system

comprising a plurality of user devices, for managing secondary distribution in which a transaction of content usable by a user device is performed between said plurality of user devices, wherein a first settlement log is issued from a first of the plurality of user devices to one of a service provider and a clearing center every time the content is distributed by the first user device and a second settlement log is issued from a second of the plurality of user devices to said first of the plurality of user devices and said first of the plurality of user devices issues said second settlement log to said one of a service provider and a clearing center every time the content is distributed by the second user device, and settlement processing for the content is performed based on the first settlement log and the second settlement log under the management of said one of a service provider and a clearing center.

2. (Previously Presented) A content secondary distribution management system

according to claim 1, wherein:

a content receiving user device for receiving the content from the first user device deducts a content usage fee from an electronic money balance disposed in said content receiving user device up to an allowable amount of money set in an issue log based on information of a usage control policy of the content, and said content receiving user device creates a usage log including a content identifier and sends said usage log to said first user device;

said first user device creates a receive log including information of the content usage fee based on said usage log received from said content receiving user device, and sends said receive log to said one of a service provider and a clearing center;

 said one of a service provider and a clearing center performs the settlement processing for the electronic money for the use of the content based on said receive log received from said first user device, and requests an account management institution to perform transfer processing for the content usage fee; and

 said account management institution performs the transfer processing according to the transfer request.

3. (Original) A content secondary distribution management system according to claim 1, wherein the content to be distributed between the user devices is contained in a secure container which stores a content price and information of a usage control policy including profit distribution information which contains information of a profit to a content provider, and wherein said one of a service provider and a clearing center constructs a form of the transfer processing according to a log containing a content fee payer and a content fee receiver based on the profit distribution information.

4. (Original) A content secondary distribution management system according to claim 2, wherein the usage control policy information includes information indicating whether the secondary distribution of the content between the user devices is allowed, and wherein, upon receiving the receive log created for a content in which the secondary distribution is not allowed, said one of a service provider and a clearing center nullifies settlement processing to be performed for said receive log.

5. (Original) A content secondary distribution management system according to claim 1, wherein each of the user devices for performing the transaction of the content comprises an encryption processing unit, and, when sending and receiving data, mutual authentication processing is performed between the user devices, and the user devices attach a digital signature to data to be sent and, upon receiving the data, they verify the integrity of the digital signature.

6. (Original) A content secondary distribution management system according to claim 1, wherein each of said user devices, said service provider, and said clearing center comprises an encryption processing unit, and, when sending and receiving data, mutual authentication processing is performed, and said user devices, said service provider, and said clearing center attach a digital signature to data to be sent, and, upon receiving the data, they verify the integrity of the digital signature.

7. (Previously Presented) A content secondary distribution management system according to claim 1, wherein said clearing center comprises a user balance database for managing an electronic money balance of a content receiving user device, and said clearing center creates an issue log in which an allowable amount of money is set up to the electronic money balance registered in said user balance database, and sends said issue log to said content receiving user device.

8. (Original) A content secondary distribution management system according to claim 2, wherein the usage control policy information includes profit distribution information of the content usage fee, and wherein said usage log and said receive log include the profit distribution information, and said one of a service provider and a clearing center performs the

settlement processing for the content usage fee based on the profit distribution information and also sends the transfer request to said account management institution.

9. (Currently Amended) A content secondary distribution management method for managing secondary distribution in which a transaction of content usable by a user device is performed between a plurality of user devices, said content secondary distribution management method comprising the steps of:

issuing a first settlement log for the use of the content from a first of the plurality of user devices to one of a service provider and a clearing center every time the content is distributed by the first user device;

issuing a second settlement log for the use of the content from a second of the plurality of user devices to said first of the plurality of user devices every time the content is distributed by the second user device;

issuing said second settlement log for the use of the content from said first of the plurality of user devices to said one of a service provider and a clearing center every time the content is distributed by the second user device; and

performing settlement processing for the content based on the first settlement log and the second settlement log under the management of said one of a service provider and a clearing center.

10. (Previously Presented) A content secondary distribution management method according to claim 9, further comprising the steps of:

deducting a content usage fee from an electronic money balance disposed in a content receiving user device up to an allowable amount of money set in an issue log based on information of a usage control policy of the content;

creating a usage log including a content identifier;

sending said usage log to said first user device;

creating a receive log including information of the content usage fee based on said usage log received from said content receiving user device;

sending said receive log to said one of a service provider and a clearing center;

performing the settlement processing for the electronic money for the use of the content based on said receive log received from said first user device;

requesting an account management institution to perform transfer processing for the content usage fee; and

performing the transfer processing according to the transfer request.

11. (Previously Presented) A content secondary distribution management method according to claim 9, wherein the content to be distributed between the user devices is contained in a secure container which stores a content price and information of a usage control policy including profit distribution information which contains information of a profit to a content provider, the method further comprising the step of constructing a form of the transfer processing according to a log containing a content fee payer and a content fee receiver based on the profit distribution information.

12. (Previously Presented) A content secondary distribution management method according to claim 10, wherein the usage control policy information includes information

indicating whether the secondary distribution of the content between the user devices is allowed, and wherein, upon receiving the receive log created for a content in which the secondary distribution is not allowed, the method further comprising the step of nullifying settlement processing to be performed for said receive log.

13. (Previously Presented) A content secondary distribution management method according to claim 9, wherein each of the user devices for performing the transaction of the content comprises an encryption processing unit, and, when sending and receiving data, the method further comprising the step of performing mutual authentication processing between the user devices; and attaching a digital signature to data to be sent.

14. (Previously Presented) A content secondary distribution management method according to claim 9, wherein each of said user devices, said service provider, and said clearing center comprises an encryption processing unit, and, when sending and receiving data, the method further comprising the steps of:

performing mutual authentication processing; and
attaching a digital signature to data to be sent.

15. (Previously Presented) A content secondary distribution management method according to claim 9, wherein said clearing center comprises a user balance database for managing an electronic money balance of said content receiving user device, the method further comprising the step of creating an issue log in which an allowable amount of money is set up to the electronic money balance registered in said user balance database; and sending said issue log to said content receiving user device.

16. (Previously Presented) A content secondary distribution management method according to claim 10, wherein the usage control policy information includes profit distribution information of the content usage fee, and wherein said usage log and said receive log include the profit distribution information, the method further comprising the step of:

performing the settlement processing for the content usage fee based on the profit distribution information; and

sending the transfer request to said account management institution.

17. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium having stored therein computer-executable instructions which allows content secondary distribution management processing for managing secondary distribution in which a transaction of content usable by a user device is performed between a plurality of user devices to run on a computer system, said computer-readable medium for performing the steps of:

issuing a first settlement log for the use of the content from a first of the plurality of user devices to one of a service provider and a clearing center every time the content is distributed by the first user device; and

issuing a second settlement log for the use of the content from a second of the plurality of user devices to said first of the plurality of user devices every time the content is distributed by the second user device; and

issuing said second settlement log for the use of the content from said first of the plurality of user devices to said one of a service provider and a clearing center every time the content is distributed by the second user device.

18. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium ~~having stored therein~~ computer executable instructions which allows content secondary distribution management processing for managing secondary distribution in which a transaction of content usable by a user device is performed between a plurality of user devices to run on a computer system, said computer readable medium for performing the steps of: according to claim 17, further performing the step of:

~~issuing a settlement log for the use of the content every time the content is distributed between said plurality of user devices; and~~

~~performing settlement processing for the identical content based on the first settlement log and the second settlement log.~~

19. (Withdrawn) A content inter-generation delivery restricting system comprising a plurality of user device, for restricting the number of inter-generation deliveries of content in which the content is sequentially delivered from a content providing user device to a content receiving user device, and said content receiving user device to another content receiving user device in a serial manner, wherein:

the content to be delivered among the user devices is contained in a secure container which stores information of a usage control policy indicating sales conditions of the content between the user devices;

the usage control policy information includes usage-control-policy generation management information indicating the maximum number of inter-generation deliveries of the content between the user devices; and

the content receiving user device which is to purchase the secure container creates information of a usage control status including usage-control-status generation management information indicating the number of inter-generation deliveries of the content between the user devices, and stores the usage control status information in a memory of said content receiving user device, and said content receiving user device checks conditions set in the usage-control-status generation management information when the content is distributed between the user devices, and performs the inter-generation delivery of the content only when said conditions are satisfied.

20. (Withdrawn) A content inter-generation delivery restricting system according to claim 19, wherein the user device which receives the content from a service provider creates the usage control status information including the usage-control-status generation management information based on the usage control policy information included in the secure container, and wherein the user device which receives the content from a second user device creates the usage control status information based on the usage control policy information included in the secure container and the usage control status information created by said second user device.

21. (Withdrawn) A content inter-generation delivery restricting system according to claim 19, wherein, in the inter-generation delivery of the content, the usage-control-status generation management information is updated by decrementing by one the number representing the usage-control-status generation management information of the usage control status information stored in the memory of said content providing user device, and the resulting usage control status information is stored in the memory of said content receiving user device.

22. (Withdrawn) A content inter-generation delivery restricting system according to claim 19, further comprising one of a service provider and a clearing center for directly or indirectly receiving a receive log issued based on processing of the inter-generation delivery of the content from said content providing user device, and for managing settlement processing for the inter-generation delivery of the content, wherein said one of a service provider and a clearing center compares the usage-control-policy generation management information recorded in said receive log received from said content providing user device with the number of receive logs issued for an identical secure container, and terminates settlement processing to be performed for the receive logs which exceed the number set in the usage-control-policy generation management information.

23. (Withdrawn) A content inter-generation delivery restricting system according to claim 19, further comprising one of a service provider and a clearing center for directly or indirectly receiving a receive log issued based on processing of the inter-generation delivery of the content from said content providing user device, and for managing settlement processing for the inter-generation delivery of the content, wherein said one of a service provider and a clearing center manages profit distribution processing for the inter-generation delivery of the content based on profit distribution information recorded in said receive log received from said content providing user device.

24. (Withdrawn) A content inter-generation delivery restricting system according to claim 23, wherein said profit distribution information includes information of a management user for managing said content providing user device, and wherein said one of a service provider and a clearing center manages the profit distribution processing for profit receivers including said

management user based on the profit distribution information recorded in said receive log received from said content providing user device.

25. (Withdrawn) A content inter-generation delivery restricting system according to claim 19, wherein each of said content providing user device and said content receiving user device comprises an encryption processing unit, and wherein, when data is sent and received, mutual authentication processing is performed between said content providing user device and said content receiving user device, and said content providing user device and said content receiving user device attach a digital signature to data to be sent, and, upon receiving the data, they verify the integrity of the digital signature.

26. (Withdrawn) A content inter-generation delivery restricting method for restricting the number of inter-generation deliveries of content in which the content is sequentially delivered from a content providing user device to a content receiving user device, and said content receiving user device to another content receiving user device in a serial manner, wherein the content to be delivered among the user devices is formed in a secure container which stores information of a usage control policy indicating sales conditions of the content between the user devices, the usage control policy information including usage-control-policy generation management information indicating the maximum number of inter-generation deliveries of the content between the user devices, said content inter-generation delivery restricting method comprising the steps of:

creating, by the content receiving user device which is to purchase the secure container, information of a usage control status including usage-control-status generation management information indicating the number of inter-generation deliveries of the content between the user

devices, and storing the usage control status information in a memory of said content receiving user device; and

 checking, by said content receiving user device, conditions set in the usage-control-status generation management information when the content is distributed between the user devices, and performing the inter-generation delivery of the content only when said conditions are satisfied.

27. (Withdrawn) A content inter-generation delivery restricting method according to claim 26, wherein the user device which receives the content from a service provider creates the usage control status information including the usage-control-status generation management information based on the usage control policy information included in the secure container, and wherein the user device which receives the content from a second user device creates the usage control status information based on the usage control policy information included in the secure container and the usage control status information created by said second user device.

28. (Withdrawn) A content inter-generation delivery restricting method according to claim 26, wherein, in the inter-generation delivery of the content, the usage-control-status generation management information is updated by decrementing by one the number representing the usage-control-status generation management information of the usage control status information stored in the memory of said content providing user device, and the resulting usage control status information is stored in the memory of said content receiving user device.

29. (Withdrawn) A content inter-generation delivery restricting method according to claim 26, wherein one of a service provider and a clearing center directly or indirectly receives a receive log issued based on processing of the inter-generation delivery of the content from said

content providing user device, and manages settlement processing for the inter-generation delivery of the content, and wherein said one of a service provider and a clearing center compares the usage-control-policy generation management information recorded in said receive log received from said content providing user device with the number of receive logs issued for an identical secure container, and terminates settlement processing to be performed for the receive logs which exceed the number set in the usage-control-policy generation management information.

30. (Withdrawn) A content inter-generation delivery restricting method according to claim 26, wherein one of a service provider and a clearing center directly or indirectly receives a receive log issued based on processing of the inter-generation delivery of the content from said content providing user device, and manages settlement processing for the inter-generation delivery of the content, and wherein said one of a service provider and a clearing center manages profit distribution processing for the inter-generation delivery of the content based on profit distribution information recorded in said receive log received from said content providing user device.

31. (Withdrawn) A content inter-generation delivery restricting method according to claim 30, wherein said profit distribution information includes information of a management user for managing said content providing user device, and wherein said one of a service provider and a clearing center manages the profit distribution processing for profit receivers including said management user based on the profit distribution information recorded in said receive log received from said content providing user device.

32. (Withdrawn) A content inter-generation delivery restricting method according to claim 26, wherein each of said content providing user device and said content receiving user device comprises an encryption processing unit, and wherein, when data is sent and received, mutual authentication processing is performed between said content providing user device and said content receiving user device, and said content providing user device and said content receiving user device attach a digital signature to data to be sent, and, upon receiving the data, they verify the integrity of the digital signature.

33. (Withdrawn) A program providing medium for providing a computer program which allows content inter-generation delivery restricting processing for restricting the number of inter-generation deliveries of content in which the content is sequentially delivered from a content providing user device to a content receiving user device, and said content receiving user device to another content receiving user device in a serial manner, to run on a computer system, the content being included in a secure container which stores information of a usage control policy including usage-control-policy generation management information indicating the maximum number of inter-generation deliveries of the content between the user devices, said computer program comprising:

a step of creating, by the content receiving user device which is to purchase the content, information of a usage control status including usage-control-status generation management information indicating the number of inter-generation deliveries of the content between the user devices, and storing the usage control status information in a memory of said content receiving user device; and

a step of checking conditions set in the usage-control-status generation management information when the content is distributed between the user devices, and performing the inter-generation delivery of the content only when said conditions are satisfied.

34. (Withdrawn) A user management system for use in secondary distribution of content, for managing users in a transaction of the content usable by a user device between user devices, wherein the content to be distributed between the user devices is formed in a secure container which stores information of a usage control policy including information of points to be provided to a content provider according to the content distribution, said user management system comprising:

a content providing user device for providing the content to another user device and for transferring the point information; and

a service provider for receiving the point information from said content providing user device, and for providing a point to at least one of said content providing user device and a management user for managing the user device based on the point information, thereby providing services according to the point.

35. (Withdrawn) A user management system according to claim 34, wherein:
a content receiving user device which receives the content deducts a content usage fee from an electronic money balance up to an allowable amount of money set in an issue log based on the usage control policy information, and said content receiving user device creates a usage log including a content identifier and sends said usage log to said content providing user device;

said content providing user device creates a receive log including information of the content usage fee based on said usage log received from said content receiving user device, and sends said receive log to a clearing center and said service provider;

 said service provider provides the corresponding point to said at least one of a content providing user device and a management user based on the point information included in said receive log; and

 said clearing center performs settlement processing for the electronic money spent for the use of the content based on said receive log.

36. (Withdrawn) A user management system according to claim 34, wherein said service provider comprises a database which stores an accumulated number of points provided to said at least one of a content providing user device and a management user, and said service provider provides services to said at least one of a content providing user device and a management user according to the accumulated number of points.

37. (Withdrawn) A user management system according to claim 34, wherein each of said content providing user device and said content receiving user device comprises an encryption processing unit, and wherein, when data is sent and received, mutual authentication processing is performed between said content providing user device and said content receiving user device, and said content providing user device and said content receiving user device attach a digital signature to the data to be sent, and, upon receiving the data, they verify the integrity of the digital signature.

38. (Withdrawn) A user management system according to claim 34, wherein each of said service provider and said content providing user device comprises an encryption processing

unit, and wherein, when data is sent and received, mutual authentication processing is performed between said service provider and said content providing user device, and said service provider and said content providing user device attach a digital signature to the data to be sent, and, upon receiving the data, they verify the integrity of the digital signature.

39. (Withdrawn) A user management method for use in secondary distribution of content, for managing users in a transaction of the content usable by a user device between user devices, wherein the content to be distributed between the user devices is formed in a secure container which stores information of a usage control policy including information of points to be provided to a content provider according to the content distribution, said user management method comprising the steps of:

providing, by a content providing user device, the content to another user device, and transferring the point information to a service provider; and

providing, by said service provider, a point to at least one of said content providing user device and a management user for managing the user device based on the point information, thereby providing services according to the point.

40. (Withdrawn) A user management method according to claim 39, wherein:
a content receiving user device which receives the content deducts a content usage fee from an electronic money balance up to an allowable amount of money set in an issue log based on the usage control policy information, and said content receiving user device creates a usage log including a content identifier and sends said usage log to said content providing user device;

said content providing user device creates a receive log including information of the content usage fee based on said usage log received from said content receiving user device, and sends said receive log to a clearing center and said service provider;

 said service provider provides the corresponding point to said at least one of a content providing user device and a management user based on the point information included in said receive log; and

 said clearing center performs settlement processing for the electronic money spent for the use of the content based on said receive log.

41. (Withdrawn) A user management method according to claim 39, wherein said service provider comprises a database which stores an accumulated number of points provided to said at least one of a content providing user device and a management user, and said service provider provides services to said at least one of a content providing user device and a management user according to the accumulated number of points.

42. (Withdrawn) A user management method according to claim 39, wherein each of said content providing user device and said content receiving user device comprises an encryption processing unit, and wherein, when data is sent and received, mutual authentication processing is performed between said content providing user device and said content receiving user device, and said content providing user device and said content receiving user device attach a digital signature to the data to be sent, and, upon receiving the data, they verify the integrity of the digital signature.

43. (Withdrawn) A user management method according to claim 39, wherein each of said service provider and said content providing user device comprises an encryption processing

unit, and wherein, when data is sent and received, mutual authentication processing is performed between said service provider and said content providing user device, and said service provider and said content providing user device attach a digital signature to the data to be sent, and, upon receiving the data, they verify the integrity of the digital signature.

44. (Withdrawn) A computer providing medium for providing a computer program which allows user management processing for use in secondary distribution of content for managing users in a transaction of the content usable by a user device between user devices to run on a computer system, wherein the content to be distributed between the user devices is formed in a secure container which stores information of a usage control policy including information of points to be provided to a content provider according to the content distribution, said computer program comprising the step of transferring the point information from a content providing user device which has provided the content to another user device to a service provider.

45. (Withdrawn) A computer providing medium for providing a computer program which allows user management processing for use in secondary distribution of content for managing users in transaction of the content usable by a user device between user devices to run on a computer system, wherein the content to be distributed between the user devices is formed in a secure container which stores information of a usage control policy including information of points to be provided to a content provider according to the content distribution, said computer program comprising:

a step of transferring the point information by a content providing user device which has provided the content to another user device, to a service provider; and

providing by said service provider a point to at least one of said content providing user device and a management user for managing the user device based on the point information, wherein said computer program executes said steps in cooperation with said program providing medium.

46. (Withdrawn) A content secondary distribution settlement system for performing settlement processing for secondary distribution of content in which the content usable by a user device is distributed between user devices, wherein the content to be distributed between the user devices is formed in a secure container which stores a content price and information of a usage control policy including profit distribution information, said profit distribution information including information of a profit to a content provider, said content secondary distribution settlement system comprising a content providing user device, which has provided the content to another user device, for transferring the profit distribution information to one of a service provider and a clearing center, both of which manage settlement processing for electronic money, wherein said one of a service provider and a clearing center performs the settlement processing for the profits to a user of said content providing user device and to the content provider which has provided the content to the user based on said profit distribution information received from said content providing user device.

47. (Withdrawn) A content secondary distribution settlement system according to claim 46, wherein said profit distribution information includes information of profit distribution to the user of said content providing user device, and to at least one of a content creator, a content distributor, and a content usage fee settlement institution.

48. (Withdrawn) A content secondary distribution settlement system according to claim 46, wherein:

a content receiving user device which receives the content from said content providing user device deducts the content price described in said secure container received from said content providing user device from an electronic money balance of said content receiving user device, and said content receiving user device creates a usage log including a content identifier and said profit distribution information and sends said usage log to said content providing user device;

said content providing user device creates a receive log including the content identifier and said profit distribution information based on said usage log received from said content receiving user device, and sends said receive log to said one of a service provider and a content provider;

said one of a service provider and a content provider manages the settlement processing for the electronic money spent for the use of the content based on said receive log received from said content providing user device, and requests an account management institution to perform transfer processing for the usage fee; and

said account management institution performs the transfer processing according to the transfer request.

49. (Withdrawn) A content secondary distribution settlement system according to claim 46, wherein each of said content providing user device and said content receiving user device comprises an encryption processing unit, and, when data is sent and received, mutual authentication processing is performed between said content providing user device and said

content receiving user device, and said content providing user device and said content receiving user device attach a digital signature to the data to be sent, and, upon receiving the data, they verify the integrity of the digital signature.

50. (Withdrawn) A content secondary distribution settlement system according to claim 46, wherein each of the user devices, said service provider, and said clearing center comprises an encryption processing unit, and, when data is sent and received, mutual authentication processing is performed among said user devices, said service provider, and said clearing center, and said user devices, said service provider, and said clearing center attach a digital signature to the data to be sent, and, upon receiving the data, they verify the integrity of the digital signature.

51. (Withdrawn) A content secondary distribution settlement system according to claim 46, wherein said clearing center comprises a user balance database which stores the electronic money balance of the user device, and creates an issue log in which an allowable amount of money is set up to the electronic money balance registered in said user balance database, and sends said issue log to said user device, and wherein said user device performs payment processing by the electronic money up to the allowable amount of money set in said issue log.

52. (Withdrawn) A content secondary distribution settlement system according to claim 46, wherein said clearing center comprises a user balance database which stores an electronic money balance of the user device, and wherein, in performing the settlement processing for the secondary distribution of the content between the user devices, when the electronic money balance of said content providing user device registered in said user balance

database is updated after distributing a profit to said content providing user device based on said profit distribution information, said clearing center creates an issue log which reflects the electronic money balance and sends said issue log to said content providing user device.

53. (Withdrawn) A content secondary distribution settlement method for performing settlement processing for secondary distribution of content in which the content usable by a user device is distributed between user devices, wherein the content to be distributed between the user devices is formed in a secure container which stores a content price and information of a usage control policy including profit distribution information, said profit distribution information including information of a profit to a content provider, said content secondary distribution settlement method comprising the steps of:

transferring by a content providing user device, which has provided the content to another user device, the profit distribution information to one of a service provider and a clearing center, both of which manage settlement processing for electronic money; and

performing by said one of a service provider and a clearing center the settlement processing for the profits to a user of said content providing user device and to the content provider which has provided the content to the user based on said profit distribution information received from said content providing user device.

54. (Withdrawn) A content secondary distribution settlement method according to claim 53, wherein said profit distribution information includes information of profit distribution to the user of said content providing user device, and to at least one of a content creator, a content distributor, and a content usage fee settlement institution.

55. (Withdrawn) A content secondary distribution settlement method according to claim 53, wherein:

a content receiving user device which receives the content from said content providing user device deducts the content price described in said secure container received from said content providing user device from an electronic money balance of said content receiving user device, and said content receiving user device creates a usage log including a content identifier and said profit distribution information and sends said usage log to said content providing user device;

said content providing user device creates a receive log including the content identifier and said profit distribution information based on said usage log received from said content receiving user device, and sends said receive log to said one of a service provider and a content provider;

said one of a service provider and a content provider manages the settlement processing for the electronic money spent for the use of the content based on said receive log received from said content providing user device, and requests an account management institution to perform transfer processing for the usage fee; and

said account management institution performs the transfer processing according to the transfer request.

56. (Withdrawn) A content secondary distribution settlement method according to claim 53, wherein each of said content providing user device and said content receiving user device comprises an encryption processing unit, and, when data is sent and received, mutual authentication processing is performed between said content providing user device and said

content receiving user device, and said content providing user device and said content receiving user device attach a digital signature to the data to be sent, and, upon receiving the data, they verify the integrity of the digital signature.

57. (Withdrawn) A content secondary distribution settlement method according to claim 53, wherein each of the user devices, said service provider, and said clearing center comprises an encryption processing unit, and, when data is sent and received, mutual authentication processing is performed among said user devices, said service provider, and said clearing center, and said user devices, said service provider, and said clearing center attach a digital signature to the data to be sent, and, upon receiving the data, they verify the integrity of the digital signature.

58. (Withdrawn) A content secondary distribution settlement method according to claim 53, wherein said clearing center comprises a user balance database which stores the electronic money balance of the user device, and creates an issue log in which an allowable amount of money is set up to the electronic money balance registered in said user balance database, and sends said issue log to said user device, and wherein said user device performs payment processing by the electronic money up to the allowable amount of money set in said issue log.

59. (Withdrawn) A content secondary distribution settlement method according to claim 53, wherein said clearing center comprises a user balance database which stores an electronic money balance of the user device, and wherein, in performing the settlement processing for the secondary distribution of the content between the user devices, when the electronic money balance of said content providing user device registered in said user balance

database is updated after distributing a profit to said content providing user device based on said profit distribution information, said clearing center creates an issue log which reflects the electronic money balance and sends said issue log to said content providing user device.

60. (Withdrawn) A program providing medium for providing a computer program which allows content secondary distribution settlement processing for secondary distribution of content in which the content usable by a user device is distributed between user devices to run on a computer system, wherein the content to be distributed between the user devices is formed in a secure container which stores a content price and information of a usage control policy including profit distribution information, said profit distribution information including information of a profit to a content provider, said computer program comprising the step of determining profit distribution to a user of a content providing user device and the content provider which has provided the content to said user based on said profit distribution information created by said content providing user device.

61. (Withdrawn) A content secondary delivery restricting system comprising a plurality of user devices, for restricting the number of secondary deliveries of content in which the content is delivered from a content receiving user device to a plurality of different user devices in a parallel manner, wherein:

the content to be distributed between the user devices is formed in a secure container which includes information of a usage control policy containing sales conditions between the user devices;

the usage control policy information includes information of the number of usage-control-policy secondary deliveries as an upper limit of the number of secondary deliveries of the content between said user devices; and

 said content receiving user device which purchases the content creates information of a usage control status including the information of the number of usage-control-status secondary deliveries, and stores the usage control status information in a memory of said content receiving user device, and, when the content is distributed between the user devices, said content receiving user device checks conditions set in the information of the number of usage-control-status secondary deliveries, and performs the secondary delivery of the content only when said conditions are satisfied.

62. (Withdrawn) A content secondary delivery restricting system according to claim 61, wherein the user device which receives the content from one of a service provider and another user device creates the usage control status information including the information of the number of usage-control-status secondary deliveries based on the usage control policy information included in the secure container.

63. (Withdrawn) A content secondary delivery restricting system according to claim 61, wherein, in the secondary delivery of the content, said content receiving user device creates the usage control status information including the information of the number of usage-control-status deliveries which is identical to the number of usage-control-policy secondary deliveries stored in the usage control policy information in the secure container, and stores said usage control status information in the memory of said content receiving user device.

64. (Withdrawn) A content secondary delivery restricting system according to claim 61, wherein the user device which receives the content from a service provider creates the usage control status information including the information of the number of usage-control-status secondary deliveries based on the usage control policy information in the secure container, and wherein the user device which receives the content from a second user device creates the usage control status information including the information of the number of usage-control-status secondary deliveries based on the usage control policy information in the secure container and the usage control status information created by said second user device.

65. (Withdrawn) A content secondary delivery restricting system according to claim 61, wherein, in the secondary delivery of the content, said content receiving user device updates the information of the number of usage-control-status secondary deliveries by decrementing by one the number of usage-control-status secondary deliveries stored in the memory of a content providing user device, and stores the resulting usage control status information in the memory of said content receiving user device.

66. (Withdrawn) A content secondary delivery restricting system according to claim 61, further comprising one of a service provider and a clearing center for directly or indirectly receiving a receive log issued based on processing of the secondary delivery of the content from a content providing user device, and for managing settlement processing for the secondary delivery of the content, wherein said one of a service provider and a clearing center compares the number of usage-control-policy secondary deliveries recorded in said receive log received from said content providing user device with the number of receive logs issued for an identical secure container, and terminates settlement processing to be performed for the receive logs which

exceed the number set in the information of the number of usage-control-policy secondary deliveries.

67. (Withdrawn) A content secondary delivery restricting system according to claim 61, further comprising one of a service provider and a clearing center for directly or indirectly receiving a receive log issued based on processing of the secondary delivery of the content from a content providing user device, and for managing settlement processing for the secondary delivery of the content, wherein said one of a service provider and a clearing center manages profit distribution processing for the secondary delivery of the content based on profit distribution information recorded in said receive log received from said content providing user device.

68. (Withdrawn) A content secondary delivery restricting system according to claim 67, wherein said profit distribution information includes information of a management user for managing said content providing user device, and wherein said one of a service provider and a clearing center manages the profit distribution processing for profit receivers including said management user based on the profit distribution information recorded in said receive log received from said content providing user device.

69. (Withdrawn) A content secondary delivery restricting system according to claim 61, wherein each of a content providing user device and said content receiving user device comprises an encryption processing unit, and wherein, when data is sent and received, mutual authentication processing is performed between said content providing user device and said content receiving user device, and said content providing user device and said content receiving

user device attach a digital signature to the data to be sent, and, upon receiving the data, they verify the integrity of the digital signature.

70. (Withdrawn) A content secondary delivery restricting method for restricting the number of secondary deliveries of content in which the content is delivered from a content receiving user device to a plurality of different user devices in a parallel manner, wherein the content to be distributed between the user devices is formed in a secure container which includes information of a usage control policy containing sales conditions between the user devices, the usage control policy information including information of the number of usage-control-policy secondary deliveries as an upper limit of the number of secondary deliveries of the content between the user devices, said content secondary delivery restricting method comprising the steps of:

creating, by said content receiving user device which purchases the content, information of a usage control status including the information of the number of usage-control-status secondary deliveries, and storing the usage control status information in a memory of said content receiving user device; and

checking by said content receiving user device conditions set in the information of the number of usage-control-status secondary deliveries when the content is distributed between the user devices, and performing the secondary delivery of the content only when said conditions are satisfied.

71. (Withdrawn) A content secondary delivery restricting method according to claim 70, wherein the user device which receives the content from one of a service provider and another user device creates the usage control status information including the information of the

number of usage-control-status secondary deliveries based on the usage control policy information included in the secure container.

72. (Withdrawn) A content secondary delivery restricting method according to claim 70, wherein, in the secondary delivery of the content, said content receiving user device creates the usage control status information including the information of the number of usage-control-status deliveries which is identical to the number of usage-control-policy secondary deliveries stored in the usage control policy information in the secure container, and stores said usage control status information in the memory of said content receiving user device.

73. (Withdrawn) A content secondary delivery restricting method according to claim 70, wherein the user device which receives the content from a service provider creates the usage control status information including the information of the number of usage-control-status secondary deliveries based on the usage control policy information in the secure container, and wherein the user device which receives the content from a second user device creates the usage control status information including the information of the number of usage-control-status secondary deliveries based on the usage control policy information in the secure container and the usage control status information created by said second user device.

74. (Withdrawn) A content secondary delivery restricting method according to claim 70, wherein, in the secondary delivery of the content, said content receiving user device updates the information of the number of usage-control-status secondary deliveries by decrementing by one the number of usage-control-status secondary deliveries stored in the memory of a content providing user device, and stores the resulting usage control status information in the memory of said content receiving user device.

75. (Withdrawn) A content secondary delivery restricting method according to claim 70, wherein one of a service provider and a clearing center directly or indirectly receives a receive log issued based on processing of the secondary delivery of the content from a content providing user device, and manages settlement processing for the secondary delivery of the content, and wherein said one of a service provider and a clearing center compares the number of usage-control-policy secondary deliveries recorded in said receive log received from said content providing user device with the number of receive logs issued for an identical secure container, and terminates settlement processing to be performed for the receive logs which exceed the number set in the information of the number of usage-control-policy secondary deliveries.

76. (Withdrawn) A content secondary delivery restricting method according to claim 70, wherein one of a service provider and a clearing center directly or indirectly receives a receive log issued based on processing of the secondary delivery of the content from a content providing user device, and manages settlement processing for the secondary delivery of the content, and wherein said one of a service provider and a clearing center manages profit distribution processing for the secondary delivery of the content based on profit distribution information recorded in said receive log received from said content providing user device.

77. (Withdrawn) A content secondary delivery restricting method according to claim 76, wherein said profit distribution information includes information of a management user for managing said content providing user device, and wherein said one of a service provider and a clearing center manages the profit distribution processing for profit receivers including said management user based on the profit distribution information recorded in said receive log received from said content providing user device.

78. (Withdrawn) A content secondary delivery restricting method according to claim 70, wherein each of a content providing user device and said content receiving user device comprises an encryption processing unit, and wherein, when data is sent and received, mutual authentication processing is performed between said content providing user device and said content receiving user device, and said content providing user device and said content receiving user device attach a digital signature to the data to be sent, and, upon receiving the data, they verify the integrity of the digital signature.

79. (Withdrawn) A program providing medium for providing a computer program which allows content secondary delivery restricting processing for restricting the number of secondary deliveries of content in which the content is delivered from a content receiving user device to a plurality of different user devices in a parallel manner to run on a computer system, wherein the content to be distributed between the user devices is formed in a secure container which includes information of a usage control policy containing sales conditions between the user devices, the usage control policy information including information of the number of usage-control-policy secondary deliveries as an upper limit of the number of secondary deliveries of the content between said user devices, said computer program comprising:

a step of creating, by said content receiving user device which purchases the content, information of a usage control status including the information of the number of usage-control-status secondary deliveries, and storing the usage control status information in a memory of said content receiving user device; and

a step of checking by said content receiving user device conditions set in the information of the number of usage-control-status secondary deliveries when the content is distributed

between the user devices, and performing the secondary delivery of the content only when said conditions are satisfied.

80-83. (Cancelled).